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#### GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

By Stan Sorkin, President  
Connecticut Food Association  
March 6, 2012

#### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO RB No. 5360: AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF CERTAIN DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES, ITEMS AND PRODUCTS TO MINORS AND PROHIBITING CERTAIN PERSONS FROM ALLOWING MINORS TO POSSESS ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR IN DWELLING UNITS AND ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

The Connecticut Food Association is the state trade association that conducts programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education and industry relations on behalf of its 240 member companies—food retailers, wholesalers, distributors, and service providers in the state of Connecticut. CFA's retail membership is composed of independent supermarkets, regional firms, and large multi-store chains employing over 30,000 associates. The majority of our members are privately held family owned supermarkets. Our goal is to create a growth oriented economic climate that makes Connecticut more competitive with surrounding states.

I am Stan Sorkin, President of the Connecticut Food Association. The Connecticut Food Association is opposed to RB No. 5360 for the following reasons:

- The terms "dangerous or potentially dangerous" to the health and well-being of persons under the age of eighteen years are vague and subject to interpretation not based on scientific fact.
- Unlike other age restricted products such as the broad categories of alcohol or tobacco, these regulations would establish a specific list of such substances, items and products making it difficult to implement and control. The state would have to provide a list of products and their corresponding UPCs to retailers via the DCP website. Annually, it is the retailer's responsibility to obtain the information from their website and not the responsibility of DCP to notify the retailer of the regulations and the products which would be covered by the statute.
- Retailers would have to "flag" specific items in their front end systems prompting cashiers to ask for identification. This system is costly to implement and maintain. In addition, the cost of training front-end personnel adds to a retailer's expense.
- New product introductions occur 52 weeks of the year. New brands get introduced to the market throughout the year. Annual updates will not prevent these new products that the law intends to prohibit from being sold to minors.
- It is the responsibility of the retailer not to sell these products and the minor is again not subject to any responsibility for initiating the purchase. Again, only retailer is subject to the penalties outlined in the bill.

- The cost of enforcement would put a burden on the state's resources to enforce the law taking resources away from alcohol and tobacco enforcement.

This bill would add to the cost of operating a supermarket in the state of Connecticut. It is another bill that adds to the perception that Connecticut is anti-business. It adds another regulation that does not create a growth oriented economic climate. It simply makes Connecticut less competitive with surrounding states.

We are asking that you vote NO on RB No. 5360.